

# **REDMOND PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**

May 25, 2005

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Chairperson Snodgrass, Commissioners Allen, Parnell, Querry

**STAFF PRESENT:** Lori Peckol, Jeff Churchill, Redmond Planning Department

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Karen Nolz

## **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chair Snodgrass in the Public Safety Building Council Chambers. The absences of Commissioners Dunn, McCarthy and Petitpas were excused.

## **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The agenda was approved by acclamation.

## **APPROVAL OF MEETING SUMMARY**

A. May 18, 2005

The meeting summary with a correction to Commissioner Parnell's statement at the bottom of page 2 regarding City technology issues was approved by acclamation. Commissioner Parnell will rewrite that paragraph and email it to Ms. Peckol for inclusion in the May 18, 2005 meeting summary.

## **ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE – None**

## **PUBLIC HEARING AND STUDY SESSION**

Implementation and Community Indicators Program

Chair Snodgrass opened the public hearing.

Mr. Churchill presented a brief summary, describing the Implementation and Community Indicators Program, what function it will serve, and the program's process. He explained that this program has two parts: an implementation action list, which is a list of actions that are needed to carry out the Comprehensive Plan, and a community indicators component. These indicators are established so progress may be gauged on the goals in the Goals, Vision and Framework Element and the extent to which Redmond is achieving these goals over time. Some indicators are evaluated every year, some every two years, and some every five. He noted that the only priority established is a timeline.

Mr. Churchill noted that two people had submitted comments by email, and that the comments would be entered into the record:

- A letter from Jim Stanton, a manager with Microsoft and a former City of Redmond Planning Department manager, addressing which issues in the program he felt were the most important and also how to prioritize different implementation actions, and discussing the role of the City as an enabler vs. an enforcer.
- A comment from a member of the community in regard to Redmond-Woodinville Road as it goes up Education Hill—the traffic on this road and plans for expansion.

There was no other public testimony. Chair Snodgrass declared the public hearing closed and opened the study session.

Chair Snodgrass noted that additions to the proposed program from the Commission's previous discussion were identified on the issues list, and inquired if there were any other additions to be added to the discussion.

Commissioner Parnell suggested three issues: determining the ratio of City employees (City of Redmond) to residents of Redmond and establishing annual objectives for the internal operations of the City, so there would be transparency and accountability in how the City government is measuring itself. Planning documents, such as those on the table at Planning Commission meetings, should be available on line, so that citizens might provide input into the planning process. He also proposed integration of information systems across City departments and providing information to connect the community and keep citizens engaged interactively in City government processes, as well as with each other.

Ms. Peckol noted that on page 5 of the proposed actions list there is the proposal for publishing more Planning Commission documents on the web. Currently, the City's web includes links to neighborhood plans and to Planning Commission agendas, meeting summaries, and proposed amendments under consideration. She asked if Commissioner Parnell wanted more than this. He responded that he is envisioning a community development discussion for citizens in an online interactive forum.

Following are the proposed actions with the Planning Commission's decisions:

- **An email address for the Planning Commission. (Commissioner Snodgrass)**  
Ms. Peckol explained that only Mr. Marpert's and her email addresses are currently listed on the web page as contacts for the Planning Commission, and when they receive comments they forward them on to the Planning Commission. Information Systems (IS) says that adding an email address for the Planning Commission, such as [planningcommission@redmond.gov](mailto:planningcommission@redmond.gov), would be relatively simple. Staff would still receive the emails and forward them to the Planning Commission. *There was agreement that this is worthwhile. The Commission also agreed that this did not need to be added to the list due to the expected timeliness of its completion.*

- **Report on demographics every five years or so. (Commissioner Parnell)**  
Staff thinks this suggestion would be a valuable addition. Although the census bureau information is provided every 10 years, there may be other sources of data such as the state. The report would be in the form of a document that would come out at the beginning of every five years to show the previous year's progress toward the goals. *This was added to the list.*
- **Add another economic indicator that would look at jobs and businesses by NIACS codes. (Was raised by Councilmember Marchione)**  
This information is already in the business license database, and would provide a means of determining if there is a shift in business types over time, what that says about the economy in Redmond, and what that says about the policies the City has adopted. The Commission thought this would be valuable. *This was added to the list.*
- **Indicators to measure progress in core preservation areas. (Commissioner Dunn)**  
*There was agreement that this is an important indicator as a way to measure additions to the amount of land in core preservation areas.*
- **Indicators to track the number of senior housing developments. (Commissioner Dunn)**  
There is a specific definition of retirement residences in the Development Guide. The City has a mechanism in place for providing a density bonus for senior housing that would be restricted to people 55 or older in retirement residences or in any multifamily zone in the city. *There was agreement that this is an important indicator.*
- **Relationship of proposed indicators to proposed indicators in the TMP. (Commissioner Dunn)**  
Ms. Peckol reported that Joel Pfundt had reviewed the language, and there were a couple refinements needed. Instead of using the term "LOS objectives," the term "measures" should be used. Under the Other Objectives category, "pace of growth" could be eliminated since it is already on the list. For the language in the final document, "status of priority action items" instead of "transportation program delivery" should be used.

Also, there are two measures that are not referenced in the TMP that had come from staff review. One is **the lane miles and the sidewalk miles per capita**, and the other is **school bus ridership**. The only information provided by the school district is the bus ridership information. A concern expressed by staff is that this provides only part of the information concerning how students are getting to/from school.

Commissioner Query suggested doing a traffic study for a day, or whatever makes a valid sample, at the high school and a selected elementary school. She also suggested that the City partner with the school district to do a transportation survey.

Mr. Churchill suggested inquiring about how many parking permits are sold to students.

*There was agreement that this would be a valuable indicator and that the City should partner with the School District to broaden the indicator by determining transportation mode percentages for students traveling to school by using the bus ridership data together with periodic surveys.*

Regarding the lane miles, Commissioner Query wanted to know if there was interest in measuring bike lane miles also. She thought this would have more value over time by determining a baseline to compare if as lane miles go up, are bike and sidewalk miles also go up.

Commissioner Parnell commented that measures for bicycle friendliness are a lot more encompassing than bicycle lane miles available. He thought it should be faster to ride a bicycle downtown from Point A to Point B than driving a car.

Chair Snodgrass responded that the more miles available, the more bicycle friendly a city is; that is, unless the bike lanes are gravel, and the stop lights are all timed so that a rider has to stop at all of them.

*Miles of paved bike lanes was considered an important indicator, and added to the list.*

- **Maintenance and Operations. (Commissioner Dunn and staff)**

Staff noted that Commissioner Dunn had asked about the ease or difficulty of procuring information for any of the indicators. Staff commented that measuring maintenance and operations expenditures is possible, but the data is not centrally located and different departments measure the expenditures in different ways. Because those expenses are measured differently, the numbers may not tell the City what it wants to know. The level of expenditure could indicate how well upkeep is being done, or could indicate that infrastructure is getting older.

Chair Snodgrass commented that budget documents now are quite understandable, but expenditures such as maintenance and operation over years would be helpful to look at on a trend line.

*There was general agreement that the indicator for maintenance and operations expenditures relates directly to community goals and is worth including. The Commissioners discussed various alternatives for how the indicator could be normalized across departments, and asked staff to propose a refinement based on further consultation with various City departments.*

- **Development of an Electronic Community Interactive Forum. (Commissioner Parnell)**

This action was suggested by Commissioner Parnell.

Chair Snodgrass commented that this would not be a short-term goal, as it would not be realistic with the current budget.

Commissioner Allen commented that the Status of Planning Projects is not updated frequently enough – it should be updated every quarter, but has been done about every six months. She thought an interactive forum would be a good platform for citizen input.

*There was consensus that exploring development of an electronic, community interactive forum would be added to the action list. This would relate back to the Participation Element of the Comprehensive Plan.*

- **Integration of Computer Systems (Commissioner Parnell)**

Commissioner Parnell described his concept as adding a central exchange system for the exchange of the different departments' documents; for example, if there are more parking tickets being assigned to a particular area, this might be an indication more parking is needed. The dissemination of best practices is better when there is a central network as a central document depository. There is less duplication of effort involved in securing the City's valuable assets, which is currently hampered by having two to three networks and setting up firewalls to protect each network.

Chair Snodgrass commented that this is getting down to day-to-day management, and he would not feel comfortable telling staff or the Mayor that the City needs an integrated computer system.

Commissioner Query responded that this is a good idea and there are probably valid concerns about the City's information systems. However, she does not think it is the Planning Commission's role to dictate technology solutions for the City. She thinks that if they want to set some sort of policy direction around the improvement of the exchange of information among departments that is something that could be the Planning Commission's role, but not dictating how to do that.

Commissioner Parnell interpreted that Commissioner Query would rather see general indicators than implementing action that would be forced on the City. He said that he does not necessarily disagree with her.

Chair Snodgrass indicated that this would be an executive issue to him, and the Mayor has the Strategic Leadership Team and IS Department that are interested in

improving the computer technology for the City. He would be uncomfortable telling them how to do anything as specific as IS issues. There would be several problems with regard to this, such as privacy issues and homeland security issues.

Ms. Peckol clarified that all City staff can schedule meetings through Outlook, and there is a directory with phone numbers for all staff. There is also a portion of the City's network any staff can access. The Technical Committee members need to be able to exchange and access all participants' documents.

Commissioner Parnell asserted that he thinks it is important that the City be able to share information well with the residents because it promotes participation and makes everyone in city government aware of ways they can do their jobs better.

Ms. Peckol noted that for this public hearing, staff emailed and mailed out invitations to over 400 people, and placed the public hearing notice and proposed program on the website and posted the notice at city hall and the library.

*The other Planning Commissioners did not support Commissioner Parnell's proposal to interfere with the City's information systems, on the basis that this would not be the Planning Commission's role.*

- **Citizen Input on the Proposed Actions and Indicators from Mr. Jim Stanton, on behalf of Microsoft.**

In response to email comment from Mr. Stanton concerning interest in regulatory streamlining, the Planning Commission added an action that will involve undertaking a review of the Community Development Guide to evaluate its overall functionality. The Commission noted that typically, review and update of the Community Development Guide is focused on specific topics and that the Planning Commission has not recently undertaken an overall review of the Community Development Guide. The Commission believed it was important to involve the business community and other resource people in addition to City representatives.

Noting that Mr. Stanton has also commented on the importance of actions related to housing alternatives, Commissioner Parnell pointed out that only affordable housing is covered in the indicators. This could be improved because the statistic does not tell what proportion of homes is available in each price range. Are there a lot more expensive or mid-price homes being built and sold? Are we growing toward a good diversity of housing prices?

Chair Snodgrass replied that this information is available from the County Auditor—the prices of homes are given on the excise tax reports. *The Commission agreed to revise one of the indicators to include this information.*

Also in response to comment from Mr. Stanton, the Commission discussed whether there should be additional prioritization among the actions in each time category (short-, medium, and long-term) in order to: maximize benefit, however quantified; use public dollars most effectively; and identify opportunities for public/private partnerships where possible.

*The Commissioners considered this proposal, though all expressed concern that this would involve a level of micro-management that is not appropriate for the Planning Commission.*

On the concept of the City as an enabler versus an enforcer, Ms. Peckol noted the existing items in the proposed program that deal with this:

- Identifying regulatory barriers to housing.
- Reviewing the City's permitting process.
- Partnering with the business community on various items.
- On page 16, implementation actions which are stimulated by the Economic Vitality Element.
- Determining types of businesses that the City would like to attract, and updates needed to attract them.
- Needs for City-business partnerships to achieve certain goals.
- Strategies for recruiting businesses.

Ms. Peckol said she would follow up with Mr. Stanton the next day to determine if he thought additional actions should be considered.

Regarding the Implementation and Community Indicators Program, she explained that staff is seeking a recommendation from the Planning Commission for the City Council to consider.

To the extent that the implementation actions are tied back to policy, Commissioner Query inquired if it made sense to reference the policy.

Ms. Peckol agreed that would be a good idea, and explained that Mr. Churchill has started the process of adding in the appropriate policy as part of the table.

Commissioner Parnell suggested and the Commission agreed to add on page 2 of the program report that the periodic reports on actions and indicators will be available to the public on line.

**It was moved by Commissioner Parnell and seconded by Commissioner Allen to recommend the Implementation and Community Indicators Program, with the changes discussed, to City Council. Motion carried unanimously (4-0).**

Ms. Peckol reported that staff is planning to present an initial staff report at the June 7 City Council meeting on the proposed Implementation and Indicators Program and

that she would like to forward the final draft program to City Council if acceptable to the Planning Commission. The Commission agreed.

### **SCHEDULING/TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING(S)**

For the agenda for the joint meeting with City Council on June 22, Chair Snodgrass set a cutoff date for agenda topics of two weeks in advance. Chair Snodgrass offered to speak with Councilmember McCormick to see if she has suggestions on topics for discussion. Commissioner Snodgrass offered to provide cookies for the meeting.

Staff proposed two topics for discussion at the joint meeting:

- Scope of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Package.
- An upcoming project concerning Implementation and Refinement of the Overlake Neighborhood Plan.

Staff will brief the Planning Commission on both of these topics at the next meeting.

Chair Snodgrass added that another topic for discussion might be how City Council feels the neighborhood updates are going. Although there is so much more participation compared to when the City started, City Council might have suggestions of other strategies that could be used to get more neighborhood participation or input. The next neighborhood for review and update is Viewpoint.

*There was agreement with the two staff-proposed items.*

At the previous meeting, Commissioner Dunn had suggested discussing Transportation Master Plan work items, such as concurrency and impact fee update. Staff would propose discussing the scope and direction of these items in late summer or early fall rather than now. This timing would enable staff to begin to further develop concepts and questions for Commission and Council discussion.

*There was agreement with delaying the concurrency and impact fees discussion.*

Commissioner Parnell suggested discussing technology issues at the joint meeting. The other Commissioners did not support including this topic on the agenda.



## **REPORTS**

Ms. Peckol asked the Planning Commission members to review the changes made in the Innovative Housing Element, and send any further changes to Terry Shirk and Commissioner Querry. The Commission established a deadline of June 1 of these changes. Ms. Peckol would send out an email to all the Planning Commissioners about the date. The report will be included in the June 8 packet.

Ms. Peckol reported that there would be a City Council hearing on June 14 for the SEPA appeal related to 172<sup>nd</sup> Avenue NE.

There was agreement that the Planning Commission would like to receive a copy of the updated draft of the Transportation Master Plan after the City Council completes its review.

The Planning Commissioners reported they received their packets on the previous Saturday rather than on Tuesday as they often have. This was due to mailing from a postal box rather than sending the packets through the City's postal service.

## **ADJOURN**

Chair Snodgrass adjourned the meeting at 9:32 p.m.

Minutes Approved On:

Recording Secretary:

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